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Message Text

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ORIGIN OES-05

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 EPA-04 EUR-12 SIG-02 AID-05 CEA-01

CIAE-00 COME-00 EB-07 EA-09 FRB-01 INR-07 IO-11

NEA-10 NSAE-00 USIA-15 OPIC-06 SP-02 TRSE-00 CIEP-02

LAB-04 SIL-01 OMB-01 CEQ-01 /107 R

DRAFTED BY OES/ENP/EN:PGLASOE:EF
APPROVED BY OES/ENP/EN:LGRANT
EUR/RPE:GWOLFE
EPA:JTHOMPSON
EPA:LMILLER
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P 060153Z MAR 76
FM SECSTATE WASHDC
TO ALL OECD CAPITALS PRIORITY

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E.O. 11652: NA

TAGS: SENV, OECD

SUBJECT: PCBS AND THE OECD

REFS:(A) STATE 48565, (B) OECD PARIS 4770 (NOTAL), (C) STATE 17482 (NOTAL), (D) OECD DOCUMENT ENV(76)10, FEB. 11, 1976

1. US POSITION CONCERNING POLYCHLORINATED BIPHENYLS (PCBS) FOR MARCH 16-19 MEETING OF OECD ENVIRONMENT COMMITTEE (ITEM 6(III) OF AGENDA) WILL, IN RESUME, BE:

-- STRESS RECENT EVIDENCE OF REAL AND INCREASING DANGERS OF PCBS;

-- QUESTION HOW WELL 1973 OECD COUNCIL DECISION ON PCBS
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IS BEING IMPLEMENTED;

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-- ADMIT THAT US ITSELF HAS NOT FULLY IMPLEMENTED THE DECISION (DUE TO ABSENCE OF APPROPRIATE DOMESTIC LEGISLATION), BUT EXPLAIN SIGNIFICANT RECENT, AND PROBABLE NEAR FUTURE, DEVELOPMENTS;

-- ASK OECD MEMBER COUNTRIES FOR CANDID REPORT ON HOW EFFECTIVELY THEY ARE IMPLEMENTING 1973 DECISION;
-- ASK MEMBER COUNTRIES FOR WHATEVER INFORMATION THEY CAN PROVIDE IN RESPONSE TO QUESTIONS LISTED IN PARAGRAPH 4 BELOW;

-- PROBABLY CALL FOR A CONSULTATION ON PCBS, TO BE HELD WITHIN A FEW WEEKS FOLLOWING THE ENVIRONMENT COMMITTEE MEETING. (FYI. THE COMMITTEE HAS A FORMAL PROCEDURE WHEREBY A COUNTRY CAN CALL FOR A CONSULTATION OF INTERESTED AND INVOLVED MEMBER COUNTRIES ON CHEMICAL ISSUES WHICH TRANSCEND A COUNTRY'S BOUNDARIES.)

2. FYI. AS OECD MISSION WILL NOTE, WE ARE NOT CALLING FOR CONSULTATION IN ADVANCE OF ENVIRONMENT COMMITTEE MEETING. WHILE WE AGREE GOOD CASE COULD BE MADE FOR SUCH TIMING, WE HAVE OPTED TO FOLLOW APPROACH CONTAINED THIS CABLE. WE WILL COME TO MEETING PREPARED TO WRAP-UP DISCUSSION ON PCBS WITH A FORMAL CALL FOR A CONSULTATION, BUT WANT TO RETAIN THE FLEXIBILITY TO "FINE TUNE" THE CALL AND/OR LOBBY FOR IT INFORMALLY PRIOR TO ACTUALLY ISSUING IT. END FYI.

3. THERE FOLLOWS A LIST OF QUESTIONS CONCERNING PCBS ON WHICH THE US IS PARTICULARLY INTERESTED IN OBTAINING AS DETAILED INFORMATION AS POSSIBLE, IN ORDER TO ASSIST IT IN ASSESSING STRATEGIES FOR REGULATING PCBS AND EVALUATING SUBSTITUTES. WE RECOGNIZE THAT A FEW OF THE QUESTIONS MAY DUPLICATE IN PART THE "REQUIRED" REPORTING CALLED FOR IN THE 1973 COUNCIL DECISION. HOWEVER, AS NOTED ABOVE, EVEN THIS REPORTING LEVY IS NOT BEING EFFECTIVELY COMPLIED WITH BY MANY MEMBER COUNTRIES. ADDITIONALLY, IT WOULD BE VERY USEFUL TO HAVE CONSOLIDATED, AND UP-TO-DATE INFORMATION AVAILABLE IN ONE UNCLASSIFIED

SOURCE. WE ALSO RECOGNIZE THAT IT MOST UNLIKELY THAT ANY COUNTRY WILL BE ABLE TO GET TOGETHER COMPREHENSIVE REPLIES TO THESE QUESTIONS IN TIME FOR THE MARCH 16 OECD MEETING. HOWEVER, WE WOULD LIKE COUNTRIES TO START THINKING ABOUT THESE ISSUES, BRING TO THE OECD MEETING AS MUCH INFORMATION ON THE POINTS RAISED (PARA. 4 BELOW) AS POSSIBLE, AND BE PREPARED AND WILLING TO DISCUSS THESE AND ANY OTHER QUESTIONS THEY MAY HAVE AS POSSIBLE/

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APPROPRIATE SUBJECTS (AMONG OTHERS) FOR A CONSULTATION ON PCBS TO BE HELD LATER THIS SPRING.

4. THE QUESTIONS:

A. WHEN DID YOUR COUNTRY FIRST START TO MANUFACTURE AND/OR IMPORT PCBS? HOW MANY KILOGRAMS OF PCBS WERE PRODUCED IN TOTAL SINCE THE START OF MANUFACTURE? HOW MANY KILOS HAVE BEEN EXPORTED AND/OR IMPORTED TO DATE? HOW MANY KILOS OF PCBS ARE IN USE NOW BY OECD USE CATEGORY? HOW MANY KILOS OF PCBS HAVE BEEN DISPOSED OF VIA LANDFILL TO DATE? BY INCINERATION? BY OTHER FORMS OF DISPOSAL?

B. WHAT REGULATIONS HAVE BEEN DRAFTED OR PROMULGATED CONCERNING PCBS. IF AVAILABLE, ENGLISH TEXTS OF LAWS AND REGULATIONS WOULD BE OF GREAT VALUE.

C. WHAT HANDLING, LABELING, STORAGE, AND DISPOSAL REGULATIONS APPLY TO PRODUCTS CONTAINING OR CONTAMINATED BY PCBS? HOW HAVE THEY WORKED?

D. HAVE YOUR REGULATIONS BEEN EFFECTIVE IN REDUCING AMOUNT OF PCBS ENTERING THE ENVIRONMENT? HOW ARE THEY ENFORCED? IS MONITORING REQUIRED BY EACH FACILITY? HOW MUCH DO THEY COST THE USERS? THE GOVERNMENTS?

E. TO WHAT EXTENT HAVE SUBSTITUTES FOR PCBS BEEN INTRO-DUCED IN CAPACITORS AND TRANSFORMERS? CARBON-LESS COPY PAPER? OTHER USES?

F. WHAT TOXICITY, ENVIRONMENTAL PERSISTENCE, PERFORMANCE, AND COST DATA ARE AVAILABLE ON END SUBSTITUTES? WHAT UNCLASSIFIED

HAS BEEN YOUR EXPERIENCE IN USING VARIOUS SUBSTITUTES IN TRANSFORMERS AND LARGE AND SMALL CAPACITORS? PLEASE CONSIDER QUESTIONS OF ECONOMIC IMPACT, ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT, SAFETY OF SUBSTITUTES; SUITABILITY AND INTER-CHANGEABILITY OF SUBSTITUTES ON USE, HANDLING, DISPOSAL FOR SUBSTITUTES; MONITORING REQUIREMENTS.

G. WHAT ENVIRONMENTAL TESTS ARE REQUIRED FOR REPLACE-MENT FLUIDS?

H. WHAT FURTHER RESEARCH AND DEVELOPMENT IS DIRECTED TO EXISTING AND NEW SUBSTITUTES?

5. ACTION REQUESTED: (1) USOECD, PLEASE CONVEY GIST OF PARAGRAPHS 1, 3 AND 4 TO ENVIRONMENT DIRECTORATE,

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AND REPS OF OTHER MEMBERS' PERMANENT DELEGATIONS. LATTER SHOULD BE SIMULTANEOUSLY ASKED TO SEEK THEIR GOVERNMENTS' SUPPORT FOR US POSITION; (2) US EMBASSIES, PLEASE CONVEY SUBSTANCE OF PARAGRAPHS 1, 3 AND 4, TO APPROPRIATE HOST GOVERNMENT OFFICIAL(S) ASKING FOR SYMPATHETIC SUPPORT OF US BY THEIR DELS AT UPCOMING OECD MEETING AND PROVISION AT THAT MEETING OF AS MUCH INFORMATION IN REPLY TO THE QUESTIONS IN PARAGRAPH 4 AS IS OBTAINABLE ON THIS SHORT NOTICE. KISSINGER

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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01 JAN 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: POLICIES, DRUGS, COMMITTEE MEETINGS
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 06 MAR 1976
Decaption Date: 01 JAN 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: n/a
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Authority: n/a
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment:
Disposition Date: 01 JAN 1960
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1976STATE055080
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: PGLASOE:EF
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: N/A
Errors: N/A
Film Number: D760085-0629
From: STATE
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1976/newtext/t19760387/aaaacyub.tel
Line Count: 178
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Office: ORIGIN OES
Original Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 4
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: n/a
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: 76 STATE 48565, 76 OECD PARIS 4770
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Authority: ShawDG
Review Comment: n/a
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 31 AUG 2004
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review History: RELEASED <31 AUG 2004 by meiwc>; APPROVED <03 DEC 2004 by ShawDG>
Review Markings:

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04 MAY 2006

Review Media Identifier:
Review Referrals: n/a
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: PCBS AND THE OECD
TAGS: SENV, US, OECD
To: OECD POSTS
Type: TE
Markings: Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 04 MAY 2006